

Exercise and Diabetes

Children with diabetes should be encouraged to participate in regular physical activity. This includes participation in physical education classes, team sports, and other activities.

Benefits of exercise for the child or adolescent with diabetes include:

- Lowers blood glucose levels
- Improves cardiovascular conditioning
- Helps with weight loss or weight maintenance
- Increases flexibility, muscle strength, and endurance
- Improves self-image, overall attitude, and quality of life

Special Considerations for Children with Diabetes:

- Exercise may cause hypoglycemia (during exercise as well as up to 24 hours after exercise of long duration) so food and/or insulin may need to be adjusted.
- The child should test blood glucose before exercise and may need to test during exercise if the exercise is of long duration or high intensity, or the child exhibits symptoms of low blood glucose.
- The child should not exercise if blood glucose is <70 or >240 mg/dl and they have urine ketones.

- The child may exercise if low blood sugar is treated successfully.
- The child may exercise if their blood glucose is >240 mg/dl and they DO NOT have urine ketones.
- The child should carry or have easy access to a food or fluid containing simple sugar (e.g. glucose tabs).
- The child should always wear diabetes identification in a visible location.

